

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 DHA-02

L-03 ORM-02 PRS-01 SCA-01 VO-03 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 /059 W

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P 090500Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7526

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 3507

FOR AF/E COOTE FROM PETREE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: SREF, PFOR, ET, JA

SUBJECT: ETHIOPIAN DIPLOMAT SEEKS REFUGE

1. LATE MARCH 8 ETHIOPIAN FIRST SECRETARY IN TOKYO ZEWGE MELAK MENGESHA CALLED ON POLCOUNS URGENTLY AT HIS REQUEST TO ASK WHETHER IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR HIM TO GO TO THE U.S. AND REMAIN QTE FOR THE TIME BEING UNQTE. HE SAID HE HAS RECEIVED ORDERS DIRECTING HIM TO RETURN TO ADDIS ABABA BY MARCH 24, FOLLOWING ARRIVAL IN TOKYO IN DECEMBER OF AMBASSADOR MILLION NEQNEQ MENGESHA, AS HE CALLS HIMSELF HERE, HAS BEEN STATIONED IN TOKYO SINCE SEPTEMBER 1966, SERVING AS CHARGE DURING MUCH OF THAT PERIOD.

2. MENGESHA SAID MILLION BROUGHT WORD OF INCREASING TENSION IN ADDIS, AND OTHER ETHIOPIAN VISITORS TRANSITING TOKYO HAVE ADVISED HIM STRONGLY TO AVOID RETURN TO ETHIOPIA AT THIS TIME. HE SAID HE HAS NO DIRECT INDICATION THAT HE PERSONALLY IS IN DANGER OF IMPRISONMENT, BUT RECENT WORD OF DISMISSAL OF CABINET OFFICIALS AND IMPRISONMENT OF WIVES OF OFFICIALS OF FORMER REGIMES HAS CAPPED RISING CONCERN ABOUT HIS FUTURE AND THAT OF HIS FAMILY, WHO ARE NOW IN ADDIS. HE SAID HE HAS RECEIVED WORD FROM BROTHER-
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IN-LAW PAULOS ASRAT IN EUROPE, AYALEW MOLTOTAL IN

MEXICO CITY AND BROTHER DEAN MELAK AT ALEMAYA AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE THAT IT WOULD BE QTE DANGEROUS AND UNPRODUCTIVE UNQTE TO RETURN NOW. HE SAID HE SUSPECTS THE URGENCY OF HIS ORDERS AND HAS LEARNED THAT ALL DIPLOMATIC SERVICE PERSONNEL WHO HAVE NOT RECENTLY RETURNED ARE BEING RECALLED AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE.

3. MENGESHA SAID HE HAS BEEN UNABLE TO OBTAIN DETAILED INFORMATION ON CONDITIONS IN ETHIOPIA, BUT FRIENDS INFORM HIM THAT A NUMBER OF INSURGENCIES ARE ACTIVE, INCLUDING GENERAL NEGA ON SUDAN BORDER AND MENGESHA SEYOUM IN TIGRE. RECENT INCIDENTS AT DJIBOUTI WERE MATCHED WITH EXTREME TENSION AMONG AFARS NOW AFFECTING GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION IN WOLLO AND OTHER REGIONS. LOCAL UPRISING BY PEASANTS CONTINUE TO OCCUR WITHOUT WARNING, AND INDIRECT WORD FROM RELATIVES INDICATES RESTLESSNESS IN MILITARY. MENGESHA EXPECTS QTE CRISIS UNQTE FAIRLY SOON.

4. CONCERNING HIS OWN MOVEMENTS, MENGESHA SAID HE HOLDS EAL TICKET WHICH NORMALLY WOULD ROUTE HIM DIRECTLY TO EITHER PEKING OR BOMBAY FOR EAL FLIGHT TO ADDIS. HE SAID HIS EDUCATION WAS COMPLETELY OBTAINED IN INDIA, FOLLOWING WHICH HE ENTERED DIPLOMATIC SERVICE. HE HAS NEVER LIVED IN U.S. AND THEREFORE DOES NOT HAVE PERSONAL CONTACTS WHICH MIGHT BE HELPFUL IN MAKING REFUGE ARRANGEMENTS. IF HE WERE ENCOURAGED TO BELIEVE SOMETHING COULD BE WORKED OUT, HE WOULD TURN IN HIS PRESENT TICKET AND TRAVEL TO U.S., OSTENSIBLY EN ROUTE HOME. IF NO ENCOURAGEMENT ABOUT SUCH ARRANGEMENTS IN U.S. IS POSSIBLE HE FEELS HE WOULD BE UNWISE TO DEVIATE FROM NORMAL ROUTE TO ADDIS. HE SAID HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO PROLONG HIS STAY IN TOKYO BY WEEK OR TWO IF TIME WERE REQUIRED TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES.

5. APPRECIATE GUIDANCE FOR RESPONSE TO HIS PERSONAL APPROACH, WHICH OBVIOUSLY SHOULD BE HELD CLOSELY FOR TIME BEING.
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